

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) A software system for efficient procurement of operating resources within resources within an enterprise, comprising:
- requisition record generating means for generating a requisition record for a requisition, the requisition record indicating at least an operating resource that a requester desires to purchase, the requisition record generating means generating the requisition record responsive to a combination of:
 - input by a requestor including a commentary entry describing a purpose for indicating the operating resource to the requisition record; and
 - operating resource information in an operating resource information database;
 - approval path determining means, responsive to the requisition record to approval rules in a n approval rules database, for determining an approval path for the requisition record, among various ones of a plurality of possible approvers, required to approve the requisition record based on the commentary entry;
 - approval path handling means for guiding the requisition record along the determined approval path, wherein the approval path handling means generates a global approval indication based on the commentary entry and in response to the requisition record successfully traversing the approval path.

a2 4. (Amended) The system of claim 2, wherein the order generating means includes means for determining a method of communicating the order to the supplier.

5. (Amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the approval path determining means determines the approval path for the requisition record at least in part in response to a purchase amount field in the requisition record.

Pr
017
a3 14. (Amended) The software system of claim 1, and further comprising:
adaptor means for retrieving data from a legacy database program;
wherein the requisition record generating means completes fields of the requisition record using the data retrieved from the legacy database program.

a4 17. (Amended) The software system of claim 16, wherein the adaptor means includes means for interacting to the legacy database program at specified time intervals.

a5 23. (Amended) The software system of claim 1, wherein:

25 the approval rules database includes an order definition of which approvers approve the requisition serially and which approvers approve the requisition in parallel; and the approval path handling means operates responsive to the order definition.

27. (Amended) The software system of claim 26, wherein:

26 the approval path handling means includes non-response handling means, responsive to an amount of time during which the requisition is at a particular position in the approval path without any action being taken by the approver at that position, for moving the requisition to another approver who has a relationship with the approver who took no action.

28. (Amended) The software system of claim 27, wherein:

the relationship is indicated by chain of command data defined in an ERP database, and

the system further includes an ERP adaptor for accessing the chain of command data from the ERP database.

30. (Amended) The software system of claim 26, wherein:

the action taken by the approver at the particular location in the approval path further includes:

modifying at least a portion of the requisition record; and

the approval path handling means includes modification response means, operating in response to an approver modifying a requisition, for causing the approval path determining means to determine a replacement approval path, responsive to the modified requisition.

a7 31. (Amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the approval path handling means includes non-response handling means, responsive to a request from the requestor, for moving the requisition from a first approver who has taken no action to a second approver who has a relationship to the approver who took no action.

a8 33. (Amended) The system of claim 31, wherein the relationship is at least defined in the approval rules.

Claims 35-50 have been added:

35. (New) A machine-readable medium having a set of executable instructions to cause a machine to perform a method for facilitating electronic commerce, the method comprising:
querying a user about a purchasing decision via a user interface, wherein the user is to reply to the query by selecting one or more requisition information selections from a user interface;
receiving the selected requisition information;
presenting additional requisition information selections to be selected via the user interface based on the previously selected requisition information until a termination criteria has been met; and
generating automatically an electronic requisition form based on the selected requisition information, the selected requisition information to include a item description of an item being offered by at least one of a plurality of suppliers.
36. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 35, wherein the selected ~~requisition information includes favorite frequently ordered items.~~
37. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 35, wherein the user interface is a web-browser.

38. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 35, wherein the presenting additional information includes presenting specific accounting information based on the supplier associated with the item selected.

39. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 35, wherein the selected requisition information includes shipping information.

40. (New) A machine-readable medium having a set of executable instructions to cause a machine to perform a method for facilitating electronic commerce, the method comprising:
generating an electronic requisition form to be delivered to at least one of a plurality of suppliers, the electronic requisition form to include commentary to explain a purpose of the electronic requisition form.

41. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 40, wherein the commentary is based on an item to be purchased from one of the plurality of suppliers.

42. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 40, wherein the commentary is visible only to a user having approval authority.

43. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 41, wherein commentary is editable by the user having approval authority.

44. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 41, wherein the commentary uses threading to maintain context.

45. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 40, wherein the commentary includes an electronic document attached to the electronic requisition form.

46. (New) A machine-readable medium having a set of executable instructions to cause a machine to perform a method for facilitating electronic commerce, the method comprising:
generating an electronic receipt to acknowledge receiving an ordered item, wherein the ordered item was ordered via an electronic requisition form; and
automatically transmitting the electronic receipt to a purchasing agent.

47. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 46, wherein the electronic receipt includes an indication that the ordered item is rejected.

48. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 47, wherein the electronic receipt includes commentary from the receiver of the item explaining why the ordered item is rejected.

49. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 46, wherein the electronic receipt acknowledges receiving all the items ordered in a previously submitted electronic requisition form.

50. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 46, wherein the electronic receipt includes an indication that the ordered item is accepted to trigger a payment for the ordered item.